

Message Text

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SUBJ: NARCOTICS: GOC MINJUSTICE SAYS COLOMBIA VICTIMIZED BY
DRUG TRAFFICKERS AND CONSUMER COUNTRIES; CALLS FOR INTER-
NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL FUND.

SUMMARY: IN A MAJOR SPEECH PREPARED FOR PRESENTATION BEFORE THE
FIRST NATIONAL MEDIA SEMINAR ON DRUGS HELD LAST WEEKEND, GOC MIN-
JUSTICE SAMUEL HOYOS ARANGO EMPHASIZED THE NOW FAMILIAR GOC VIEW
THAT COLOMBIA IS A VICTIM OF BOTH INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS TRAF-
FICKERS AND OF THE HUGE MARKET FOR ILLICIT DRUGS THAT EXISTS IN
THE INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES. HE ADDED THAT IT WAS UNFAIR FOR
SMALL, POOR STATES LIKE COLOMBIA TO FOOT THE BILL FOR FIGHTING
DRUG TRAFFIC; HE CALLED FOR A NEW INTERNATIONAL ACCORD ON NARCOT-
ICS CONTROL AND FOR THE CREATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL FUND TO PAY
FOR NARCOTICS LAW ENFORCEMENT. FINALLY, THE MINISTER EMPHASIZED
THAT, WHEN COMPARED TO THE CORRUPTION ENGENDERED BY TRAFFICKING,
DRUG ADDICTION AND CONSUMPTION IN COLOMBIA WERE MINOR PROBLEMS.
HE ADMITTED IN A FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW HOWEVER, THAT THE GOC IS UN-
ABLE TO COPE EFFECTIVELY WITH EITHER PROBLEM. END SUMMARY.

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1. THE MAJOR THRUST OF MINISTER HOYOS' REMARKS FOR THE MEDIA

SEMINAR WAS DIRECTED AT PROPOSALS FOR A NEW MULTINATIONAL CONVENTION ON DRUGS AND THE CREATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR NARCOTICS CONTROL. THE MINISTER STATED THAT EACH SIGNATORY TO THE NEW CONVENTION WOULD BE EXPECTED TO CONTRIBUTE TO AN INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR DRUG CONTROL, WHICH WOULD PAY THE COSTS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS DIRECTED AGAINST TRAFFICKERS. THE MINISTER GAVE NO FURTHER DETAILS ON HOW THE FUND MIGHT BE MANAGED, OR HOW HIS PROPOSED SYSTEM MIGHT DIFFER FROM EXISTING MULTILATERAL DRUG CONTROL FUNCTIONS VESTED IN THE UNITED NATIONS.

2. IN HIS SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS, THE MINISTER TOOK THE FAMILIAR COLOMBIAN LINE THAT THIS COUNTRY IS MORE VICTIMIZED THAN VICTIMIZER IN TERMS OF INTERNATIONAL DRUG TRAFFICKING. IT IS "UNJUST", HE SAID, "THAT THE HIGH COSTS OF CONTROLLING INTERNATIONAL TRAFFICKING SHOULD FALL ON ONE SINGLE POOR COUNTRY LIKE OURS WHEN THE RESULTS (OF THIS CONTROL) BENEFIT HIGHLY DEVELOPED NATIONS." DEVELOPING THIS LINE OF ARGUMENT HOYOS STATED THAT "IT WOULD BE WORTHWHILE TO REFLECT ON THE INJUSTICE OF STIGMATIZING A (DRUG) PRODUCING COUNTRY, OR ITS CITIZENS, OR A COUNTRY THROUGH WHOSE TERRITORY SUCH SUBSTANCES PASS. WHAT," HE ASKED, "IS THE BASIS OF THIS TRAFFICKING IF NOT IN THE APPETITES OF CITIZENS OF THE CONSUMING COUNTRIES WHO ARE ALWAYS PREPARED TO PAY THE HIGHEST PRICES FOR DRUGS?" IN ANOTHER RHETORICAL QUESTION ECHOING THE LINE TAKEN BY PRESIDENT LOPEZ JUST PRIOR TO HIS 1975 VISIT TO THE US, THE MINISTER ASKED HIS AUDIENCE "IF THE AUTHORITIES OF DRUG-CONSUMING COUNTRIES WERE ABLE TO CONTROL ILLEGAL IMPORTATION OF DRUGS, WOULD NOT THE DRUG PROBLEM MAGICALLY DISAPPEAR IN DRUG-PRODUCING COUNTRIES?" HOYOS DID NOT MENTION THE US BY NAME, BUT THE COUNTRY OF REFERENCE WAS CLEAR TO HIS COLOMBIAN AUDIENCE.

3. DEVELOPING THIS THEME STILL FURTHER, THE MINISTER NOTED THE INABILITY OF CERTAIN LARGE, INDUSTRIALIZED STATES TO CONTROL THE ILLEGAL IMPORTATION OF NARCOTICS, THE FAILURE OF POLICING EFFORTS IN THIS REGARD, HE SAID, IS CREATING "A MORAL HOLOCAUST" IN COLOMBIA. "BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION ORIGINATING FROM THE HIGH PRICE OF ILLICIT DRUGS ARE BEGINNING TO INVADE EVERY LEVEL OF GOVT. ... IT IS MORALLY INFECTING (EVEN) OUR SMALL FARMER," HE ADDED.

4. TURNING TO THE PROBLEM OF DRUG ABUSE, MINISTER HOYOS AVERRED THAT NARCOTICS CONSUMPTION IN COLOMBIA WAS MINOR WHEN COMPARED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WITH OTHER COUNTRIES, AND THAT ABUSE IS "FAR LESS IMPORTANT THAN THE TREMENDOUS MORAL HARM WE ARE SUFFERING FROM THE CORRUPTION OF OUR GOVT OFFICIALS AND OUR PEOPLE THROUGH TRAFFIC IN THESE HORRIBLE SUBSTANCES." IN A FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW BROADCAST ON NATIONAL TV MARCH 9, HOYOS REITERATED THAT ABUSE WAS LESS A PROBLEM TO COLOMBIA THAN GROWING TRAFFICKING, BUT ADMITTED THAT THE PRESENT GOC LEGISLATION ON DRUGS WAS NEITHER REDUCING DRUG CONSUMPTION AMONG COLOMBIAN YOUTH, NOR STOPPING NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING AND RE-

SULING CORRUPTION.

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